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The abolition of aggressive
war by comprehensive...

London

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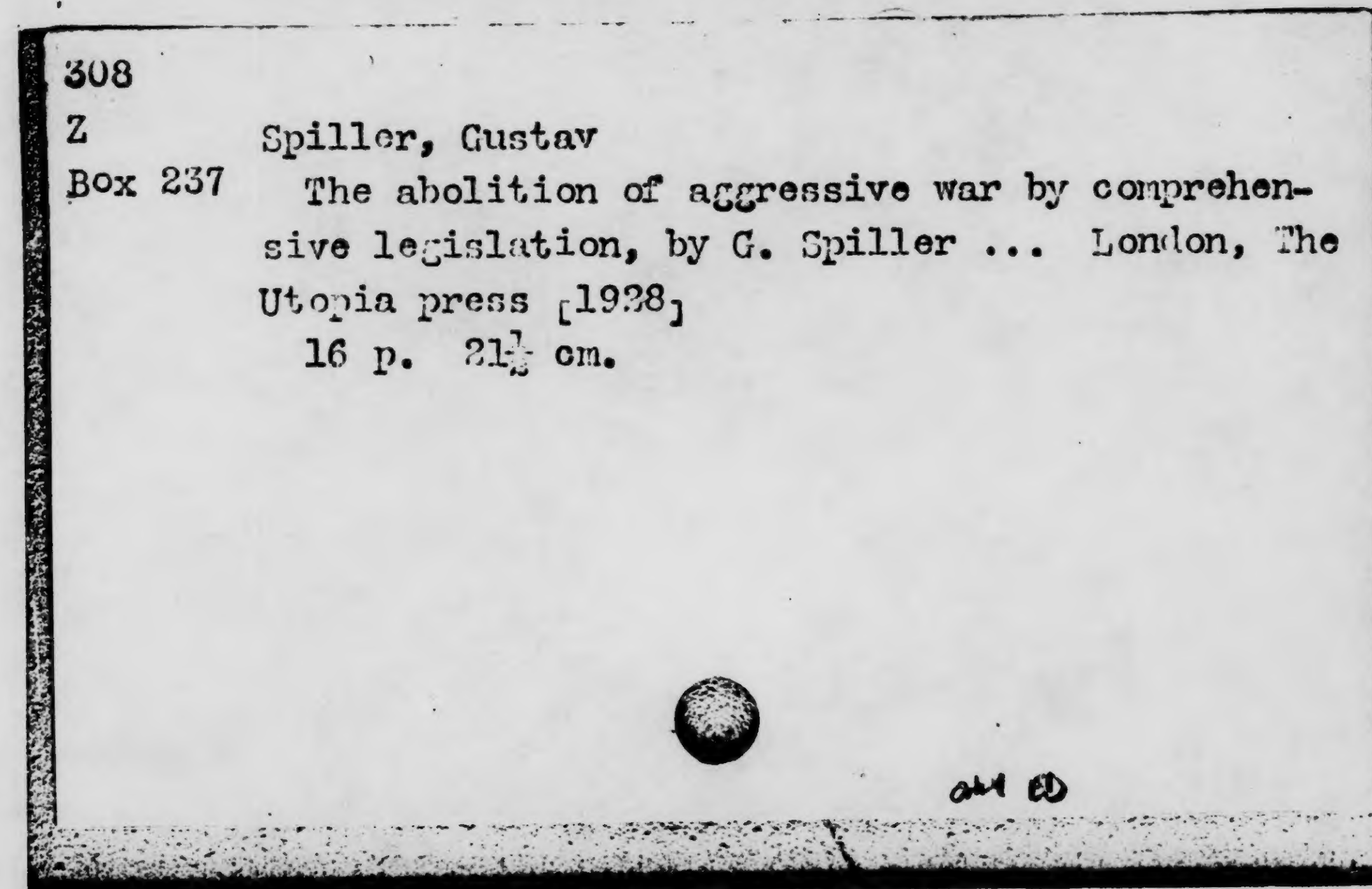
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The
Abolition of Aggressive War
by
Comprehensive Legislation

By

G. SPILLER

*Organiser of the First International Moral Education Congress (1908)
and of the First Universal Races Congress (1911), both held at the
University of London, South Kensington; late on the Staff of the
League of Nations (I.L.O.).*

*With the Author's request for active furtherance of
the proposal—*

To the Members of the House of Commons.

*To Prime Ministers, Foreign Ministers, and Ambassa-
dors in London.*

*To National and International Peace, Women's, and
kindred organisations.*

To

LONDON

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The Abolition of Aggressive War by Comprehensive Legislation

In the last century the British Parliament headed and led the movement for the legislative outlawry of slavery. This pamphlet contains, in the main, a plea for the British Parliament to head and lead now in the same wholehearted and resolute spirit—in the first instance, by passing detailed legislation outlawing aggressive war—the movement for the legislative outlawry of war.—Authoritative opinions are cited to show that war has become a monster which we must quickly slay or it will quickly slay us and our civilisation.—The danger of compromises and delays is pointed out.—Of course, *the one thing of crucial importance is that SOME nation should speedily assume the leadership in the legislative movement outlined.*

I. REASONS FOR THE PROPOSAL.

IN speaking of war and peace, we ought to get behind frivolities, behind timidities, behind nice calculations, behind futile compromises.

The hour is gone when we may coolly weigh and balance the pros and cons of war and peace. To say that war is necessary for the moral well-being of nations, that it evokes the finer qualities in man, that it constitutes the only method of settling certain differences between nations, that wars have always been and must therefore always remain, that armed conflicts between nations can no more be prevented than armed conflicts between individuals, leaves us to-day unmoved. Only Rip van Winkles who have been asleep from the time the late war began can seriously put forward such arguments or expect others to deal with them. What was a quarter-truth before the war, has become meaningless jargon and wanton trifling in the face of a critical situation.

A veritable revolution has taken place since 1914. We learnt then that wars, in our international age, must tend to be world wars; a little later, we had an intimation of the distant possibilities of air warfare and the consequent abolition of war frontiers; and slowly it is now dawning on mankind that the next world war may be largely a chemical, even a bacterial, war. War, in these circumstances, would be so frightful as to blot out perhaps whole countries. If some twenty million lives were lost owing to the last war, possibly five times that number—a hundred million—might be hurled into the bottomless pit of death as a result of the next war, and if the cost of the last war to Great Britain was about £10,000,000,000, a truly staggering sum, and if England lost

Each nation can do something far-reaching NOW—legislate against aggressive war.

then 8 million tons of merchant shipping out of a total of 20 million tons (Vice-Admiral A. P. Davidson, *The Times*, 24/12/1927), a new war might mean for England utter bankruptcy, grinding poverty for generations to come, and the end of the British Empire. Those who toy, who coquet, who play with the idea of war, who exhaust their morbid ingenuity in inventing reasons and excuses for it, are wasting their time and ours, and should be invited to find a less mischievous occupation.

This is no over-statement at all, for not what may seem the wildest exaggeration could do justice to what is likely to happen in a new war. Let me cite a few opinions—not those of Communists, nor Socialists, nor Liberals, but those of Conservatives. Lord Cecil, for instance, recently stated in a minute which he circulated to the Cabinet—not exactly a document where you would expect reckless assertions—"that an international agreement for the reduction and limitation of armaments" (mark what follows!) "is essential for the safety of European civilisation and the existence of the British Empire." (*The Times*, 16/11/1927.) Thus no less than the safety of European civilisation and the existence of the British Empire are at stake! Can we afford to have these jeopardised by specious sophistries?

It might be said that Lord Cecil is disgruntled and an unpractical idealist; that he does not reflect moderate and conservative opinion. As we know, Mr. Ronald McNeill, now Lord Cushendun, became his successor in office, and no one would dream of challenging his stanch conservatism. Yet in his very first speech after his promotion to the Cabinet as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, he out-Cecilised Cecil. He actually averred that "another war on a large scale would wipe out European civilisation." (*The Times*, 5/11/1927.) It is out of the question that, like the Psalmist, Lord Cushendun should have spoken in haste. However, eleven days later he stated in the House of Lords that, "ever since the war he had been convinced that any repetition of the war on any considerable scale, or even on any scale at all," (notice "or even on any scale at all"!)" "would be an absolutely unthinkable disaster for mankind and the world." (*The Times*, 16/11/1927.) And now to our present Prime Minister, Mr. Stanley Baldwin. He, of all politicians, may be expected to weigh his words and take scrupulous care not to exaggerate. Yet he goes at least as far as the two noble lords whom I have quoted. On 8th of January, 1926, he said: "Who in Europe does not know that one more war in the West and the civilisation of the ages will fall with as great a shock as that of Rome?" (*The Times*, 9/1/1926.) "Who in Europe does not know?" Mr. Baldwin queries. Do you know? Have you pondered over this? Have you grasped

Comprehensive legislation alone can adequately define aggressive war and guard against it.

The League Powers have unanimously condemned aggressive war; let them embody this verdict in comprehensive national legislation.

Hec Nov. 18, 1929

the fact that "one more war in the West and the civilisation of the ages will fall with as great a shock as that of Rome"?

In the circumstances, the abolition of war—its total and immediate abolition—becomes the one practical problem of outstanding importance, beside which all other problems pale into utter insignificance; for what avails it to make this or that improvement in our civilisation, when that very civilisation is threatened in its vitals? Our primary duty, then, is to call on our statesmen to concentrate first and foremost, and with terrible earnestness, on helping to abolish war, as nearly as possible at once.

On what is this alarm as to the devastating nature of a new war based? Let us listen to some of the evidence. Sir Samuel Hoare, Great Britain's Air Minister, has drily stated: "In the whole of the late war some 300 tons of bombs only were dropped by enemy aircraft upon this country. Air forces to-day could drop almost the same weight in the first 24 hours of war, and continue this scale of attack indefinitely." (*The Times*, 17/10/1925.) Thus in ONE DAY as great a weight of bombs could be dropped upon this country as was dropped during the whole period of the late war—during FOUR YEARS!—and this, we are cheerfully informed, could continue day by day indefinitely. The mind reels at the prospect.

Nor can we place our trust in defensive organisations. So swift and untrammelled is the airplane that before we can join battle, the fiendish mischief is done and the enemy squadrons are retreating. There is, however, this sorry consolation that, if we cannot prevent London being turned into one vast graveyard, we cannot be prevented from meting out the same treatment to Paris or Berlin.

General P. R. C. Groves, Director of Air Operations for the British Air Force on all fronts in 1918, is responsible for the following instructive statement: "The gas bomb is probably by far the most effective weapon for use from aircraft.

This form of attack upon great cities, such as London or Paris, might entail the loss of millions of lives in the course of a few hours. . . . All gas experts are agreed that it would be impossible to devise means to protect the civil population from this form of attack." (L. N. Document C. T. A., 210, 1923, quoted by P. J. N. Baker, *Disarmament*, p. 277.)

A loss of millions of lives in a few hours, of more lives than perhaps in an average century of warfare in the past! And no means of preventing this! What an appalling future to look forward to! And there will be no respect paid to persons—officials, noblemen, profiteers, financiers, manufacturers, workers, women, children, the aged, the sick—all, all—will be joint victims of overwhelming and revolting catastrophes.

Or listen to Brigadier-General Mitchell, of the United

With aggressive war made impossible, defensive measures become superfluous.

States Army, giving evidence before the House of Representatives' Committee of Appropriations: "A few planes could visit New York as the central point of a territory 100 miles square, every eight days, and drop enough gas to keep the entire area inundated. . . . 200 tons of phosgene gas could be laid every eight days, and would be enough to kill every inhabitant." (P. J. N. Baker, *Disarmament*, pp. 77-8.)

To kill every one of the many million inhabitants of New York! If to this be added a shower of incendiary shells, without any one there to grapple with the conflagrations ensuing, and New York would closely resemble the ruins of the Colosseum in Rome. The disaster would be too horrible to contemplate. Previous wars, in this light, seem like charity fairs or the mimic battles of young children, or like a sleepy game of chess.

Here, again, is another responsible pronouncement made only last month by Group-Captain H. F. M. Foster, British Air Staff representative at the Disarmament Conference of the League of Nations. Speaking of the defence of London, he said: "I do not think any airman in high position would guarantee that under favourable weather conditions to the enemy, immunity could be ensured against a great city being flooded with gas, set alight with incendiary shells, and bombed with high explosives."*

Indeed, Captain Foster only echoes here what Brigadier-General Groves had less graphically stated a few months earlier: "The consensus of opinion in aviation circles," the General informed his hearers, "is that local defence is of negligible value; that no adequate means of protection against aircraft attack are yet in view." (Lt.-Commander J. C. Kenworthy, *Will Civilisation Crash?* 1927, p. 254.) And Foster proceeds to quote, with no sign of dissent, a German general officer of repute, General von Altrock, as having expressed his conception of the war of the future as frequently having "the appearance of destruction *en masse* of the entire civil population" (note "the entire civil population"! "rather than a combat of armed men." (*Times*, 8/12/1927.) Does anyone think we should tamely sit down and wait for this or, as in a way our statesmen do, spend our time learnedly discussing how many angels could dance on the point of a needle?

Soldiers, indeed, are beginning to recognise the revolution

* "The United States of America is manufacturing bombs of 4,300 pounds weight, with a bursting effect that displaces 1,000 cubic yards of hard sand. Such a bomb dropped in Piccadilly, or Park Avenue, or the Faubourg St. Honoré, or Unter den Linden, would wipe out the whole street." (Lt.-Commander J. C. Kenworthy, *Will Civilisation Crash?* 1927, p. 257.) Just think of the whole of Piccadilly wiped out by the dropping of one bomb!

Armaments are nothing but a SYMPTOM of either desire or fear of aggressive war. Remove the CAUSE and they will disappear.

which has taken place, and are ceasing to be advocates of the method of "frightfulness" for solving international differences. Only last November Field-Marshal Sir Wm. Robertson, who was from 1915 to 1918 Chief of the Imperial General Staff, expressed himself tersely and witheringly on the subject: "War," he stated, "has become a wholly detestable thing." Does anyone suggest that we should make compromises with "a wholly detestable thing"? That we may safely ignore what a soldier of the highest distinction deliberately asserts? That we can be satisfied with less than sweeping the "wholly detestable thing" out of existence? However, not only does this field-marshal anathematise war with bell and candle, but, astonishing as it may be, he pleads for propaganda in favour of the *abolition* of war. Listen to his weighty words: "I suggest that every man and woman should energetically support all efforts made for devising some more sensible and humane way of composing international differences than the destructive and futile methods upon which reliance has hitherto been unsuccessfully placed."* (Quoted in *Headway*, Dec. 1927, p. 229.) Shall we civilians be less ardent than this experienced soldier? Shall we not heed his expert advice? Shall we be less eager to have done with "the destructive and futile methods" of war?

And Professor P. J. N. Baker, in his recent work on *Disarmament*, has the following reflection: "It must be remembered that in chemical warfare there lies the risk that some country will find a gas against which there is no defence and which will therefore be an irresistible and decisive weapon." (p. 278.) Indeed, we must assume as a matter of hard, granite fact that there will be numerous surprises in a new war as there were many surprises in the last war and that the reality is bound to surpass in horror all anticipations. Nor should we forget that the destructive potentialities of warfare are growing by leaps and bounds with every year that passes.

Our authorities have been, on the one hand, conservative statesmen and, on the other, an Air Minister and eminent

* The Field-Marshal continues: "This suggestion may be thought a tame and uninspiring termination to an address on Imperial Defence. But it happens to represent the only conclusion I can reach after a military career covering, on Sunday next, a period of exactly 50 years—a period during which I was for some 20 years closely connected with the highest Councils of State in which, in some form or other, international questions of armaments and war were daily under consideration."

"If I had the casting vote," said Sir Hugh Trenchard, Chief of the Imperial Air Staff, speaking to the Cambridge Aeronautical Society, October 24, 1925, "I would very soon 'Abolish the Air.' I feel that it is an infinitely more harmful weapon of war than any other." (Rennie Smith, *General Disarmament or War?* London, 1927, p. 23.)

First, let a nation legislate against aggressive war; then, let it concentrate on inducing other nations to do likewise.

soldiers. Hence we are likely to have understated rather than exaggerated the gravity of the situation. It is therefore manifest that the prospect could not be more gruesome than it is depicted by those well qualified to speak on the subject. To risk such a war, to leave a stone unturned in the attempt to prevent it, to hesitate and halt, would be criminal lunacy.

Such being the outlook, it becomes imperative that nothing less than the total and immediate abolition of war should be aimed at. Any compromise, whatever the compromise be, is rank folly. The last world war was kindled by an obscure incident in an obscure corner of Europe, and such incidents, and more important ones, may occur any day. The probabilities of such a conflagration suddenly breaking out to-day may be small; but probabilities are entirely relative and hence a conjunction of unfortunate circumstances may in a flash precipitate a war and ruin the social heritage of thousands of years. A distant probability remains a probability and may be converted at any time into a dire reality, as has happened over and over again in the historic past. Hence probability only affords a peace foundation made of quicksand. All we can say is that it is preferable for a probability of this kind to be distant rather than near; but this is an agonisingly poor consolation. Let our statesmen rather act on the assumption that since war *MAY* be imminent, since it *MAY* come like a thief in the night, since it *MAY* be lurking round the corner, we must move heaven and earth to abolish it—abolish it unmistakably—before it can materialise.

Again, there is little actual hope that wars may be localised. As Lord Cecil expresses it: "The world is getting smaller, the relations between countries are closer. It is difficult to imagine any considerable disturbance of the peace of Europe which would not affect more or less the whole Continent, and ourselves as well." And he continues, "I do not question that any impartial man who considers what would happen in Europe apart from the League of Nations will agree that WAR ANYWHERE WOULD PROBABLY MEAN WAR EVERYWHERE." (*Lord Cecil's Lead to International Disarmament*, League of Nations Union, Speech delivered 21/12/1927, p. 8.) (Sm. caps. ours.)

It is in this light that we should view the movement in favour of the limitation or reduction of armaments. Of course, a drastic limitation would greatly relieve the harassed taxpayer, improve trade, and even liberate some money for social legislation. That is surely worth striving for. More than this. Reduced armaments and absence of rivalry in armaments, may actually stave off the evil day. Other things being equal, then, the work done at Geneva and by the national Parliaments in this direction deserves encouragement in every way. If our civilisation is to be annihilated and if we are to be poisoned with our wives, children, parents, relatives, friends, acquaint-

Complete and lasting security is only obtainable through the legislative abolition of aggressive war universally.

tances, neighbours, and, indeed, with all our fellow-citizens, there is no reason why we should hasten the day or why we should thoughtlessly precipitate a crisis. Within limits, therefore, let us take an active interest in the national and international reduction of armaments.

Only let us be sure of two things. The limitation or reduction of armaments has nothing to do, nothing whatever to do, with the abolition of war and leaves the essential problem untouched. It is a palliative, pure and simple. It cannot pretend to more. Besides, in modern conditions of rapid and nation-wide organisation, international conventions on the subject can achieve but the veriest minimum. They will mean marked national economies; they will largely stop armaments competitions; and they will reduce to a certain extent the probabilities of wars breaking out; but as it is only a matter of probabilities, they offer no guarantee whatever against renewed hostilities. The toxin will still be in the blood of the nations and only chance will decide when it shall course through the whole system and cause war-madness and an unavoidable world disaster. Accordingly, we should clearly and unequivocally distinguish between limiting armaments and abolishing war, and on no account delude ourselves into thinking that even a far-reaching all-round limitation of armaments will mean that we need no longer dread war. On the contrary, we should be clear on the point that nothing short of the LEGISLATIVE abolition of war—and of War Offices and all that appertains to them—can set our fears at rest.

The second point—a more subtle one, it is true—is of immeasurably greater and graver importance. It is this, to what extent are we devoting time to the limitation of armaments, which might with infinitely better advantage be spent on the abolition of war? Also, to what degree are our statesmen pre-occupied with limitation problems in order to avoid having to think, or permitting others to think, of abolition problems? That is, how far are we weak-mindedly or bare-facedly shirking the abolition issue, pretending to ourselves that we are too busy thinking about partial disarmament to have time left to concern ourselves with abolition measures? This attitude is very human, and few of us in our private lives escape the temptation of plunging in this direction or that so as to avoid grappling with unwelcome truths. In such cases, because of faint-heartedness, we become traitors to our higher selves.

Indeed, even the international limitation of armaments has been shelved for years because of a lack of faith. Absolute certainty, absolute security, absolute reliability are aimed at, which is but another way of aiming at inaction. Such an attitude quenches all hope and would even put an end to

War has reached a stage where the nations hold one another by the throat. It is high time they should hold one another by the hand instead.

ordinary business transactions. Lord Cecil forcibly exposed this paralysing timidity in a recent article. "If," he said, "we are going to approach every suggestion for increasing the probability of world peace, not with a desire to be convinced, but with a meticulous examination of all conceivable risks and sacrifices, however unlikely, which might be incurred, then nothing will be done. Depend upon it," he added, "peace, like every other earthly blessing, can only be obtained at a price. Are we prepared to pay it? Or are we to be for ever frightened back from its pursuit by the bogies constructed by the bureaucracy and the vast war interests, material and moral, which dominate now as ever the Government machine?" (*The Sunday Times*, 27/11/1927.)

Lord Cecil lays here his finger on the fatally weak spot in peace diplomacy. No small mind can deal with great issues. No one fascinated by detail can grasp comprehensive problems. No one frightened by every white sheet in the gloaming can assist mankind in this crisis. If this had been the spirit ruling President Wilson and the Paris Peace Conference, there would have been no Covenant of the League of Nations and no Labour Charter. The very suggestion would have been denounced by some diplomatists and ridiculed by others. Such a Covenant would have been considered the most preposterously impracticable idealism conceivable. Elaborate "proofs" would have been advanced that it could never work and would never work. Perfectly cogent arguments these, so long as we assume no change of heart and the old, devious, purblind diplomacy in power. Challenge this assumption and you have, as we have had, one triumphant Geneva Assembly after another.

A million times more so now we want a changed and purified diplomatic atmosphere. We must face the fact unflinchingly that if all previous wars were child's play compared to the so-called Great War, any new outbreak would put that war entirely into the shade, almost infinitely outfathoming it in tragic disasters and in devilish outrages against the most elementary dictates of humanity, blasting the dearly bought progress of thousands of years, and leaving behind it hundreds of millions of heart-broken and poverty-stricken mourners. We must just set our faces against war; turn away from all compromises; put our hands firmly to the plough and scorn to look back even for a moment. England, to its eternal glory, acted thus over the slavery question in the last century.

We want nations to fight war now as England fought slavery then—relentlessly, unintermittently, placing all their material and spiritual resources, all their prestige, all their international influence, unreservedly at the disposal of the anti-war cause. And as the cause of abolishing war is, comparatively speaking, vastly more precious and more sacred; as it may mean the saving of scores of millions of lives, of cities,

Be practical. Begin at the beginning and eliminate aggressive war. Do not nibble at effects.

yea of countries and of our culture; and as no insurmountable obstacle blocks the way, an even greater effort should joyfully be put forth.

II. THE PROPOSAL.

Now to the constructive proposals which should prove neither tame nor fantastic.

Why, to the extent that a new war would surpass in frightfulness the late war, to that extent the amended Covenant must surpass in thoroughness the old Covenant. We know the peace efforts hitherto made under the ægis of the League of Nations, all of which deserve our fervent blessing: dangers of war have been promptly dealt with; a Permanent Court of International Justice established; friendly international co-operation in peaceful endeavours encouraged; social and international peace strengthened through the International Labour Office; problems of security and arbitration discussed; the codification of international law taken in hand; the reduction of armaments exhaustively studied; and aggressive war condemned. The author cedes to none in admiration for the League and its achievements; but something infinitely more far-reaching is required if we are to grapple successfully with the most ruthless evil threatening humanity. The Covenant signified a great step forward, and now the time has come for a greater step to be taken—one at least as determined, as large-hearted, as idealistic, as the abolition of the slave trade and of slavery about a hundred years ago.

First of all: LET NO COUNTRY WAIT FOR ALL COUNTRIES TO AGREE ON A COMMON PLAN OF ACTION. At present everybody suspects everybody else and leaves everything therefore to everybody else. Let us, then, begin reform at home, which incidentally would prove to ourselves and to others that we are in deadly earnest and not shamming. And AS ENGLAND SET THE EXAMPLE IN ABOLISHING SLAVERY WITHIN ITS DOMINIONS, SO LET ENGLAND HEAD AND LEAD THE MOVEMENT ABOLISHING LEGISLATIVELY AGGRESSIVE WAR. (I say legislatively, for declarations and treaties on the subject are, in essence, no more than rhetorical flourishes, the more dangerous as they lull us into a fatal slumber, unless, indeed, they involve comprehensive legislative changes).^{*} If it did this, it would be blest through the ages, not only by its own kindred but by the whole world. England's name would become more renowned and far more honoured in the annals of history than those of Greece and Rome have been for the last two thousand years. Why, if success crowned the crusade, we might verily commence a new era, dating it from the final step in the

^{*} A legislatively ratified treaty banning or restricting the use of gas might be, however, concluded between the principal Air Powers.

Let each nation do what it would wish other nations to do—abolish aggressive war by comprehensive legislation.

process of the abolition of war. We should begin with the year 1 of Permanent Peace, with the year 1 P.P.

Reform, then, is to begin at home. We have frequently heard it said that Great Britain should sign the Optional Clause. Far more important than this, it has been suggested that we should express our readiness to sign all-inclusive arbitration treaties with as many countries as agree to do so. This is good in its way; but very far from good enough. Whilst Great Britain should be ready to follow this line, it is here suggested—and this is the purport of the present appeal—that PARLIAMENT SHOULD PASS COMPREHENSIVE LEGISLATION WHICH SHALL EXCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY OF GREAT BRITAIN ENGAGING IN AGGRESSIVE WARS.

On the basis of such legislation our statesmen would then, for example, have no authority to declare war or to engage in an aggressive war (which latter the Prime Minister defined recently as "an abomination and a horror"). (*The Times*, 21/12/1927.) (Will not Mr. Baldwin translate his words into a comprehensive Act?) They would wield no more power in this respect than any merchant in his office or peasant on his field. They would command no machinery for this, and any attempt in this direction would at once set Scotland Yard on their track. To the extent that consequential measures require it, the Cabinet, the Foreign Office, the War Office, the Admiralty, the Air Ministry, the Colonial Office, the Education Department, our whole diplomatic service, our criminal law, the laws relating to business firms, societies, institutions, clubs, and meetings, would be reformed root and branch; what is necessary would be done to ensure that no confusion is possible between a defensive and an aggressive war; and no defensive war would be started save when there is, and to the degree that there is, an attack with considerable forces which is persisted in in spite of remonstrances from our Parliament and from the League, to both of whom the evidence of such attack is immediately submitted for scrutiny, judgment and further action.*

^{*} Unless the law elaborately limits the interpretation of the expression "defensive war," nothing of any consequence is achieved. An aggressor may thus mendaciously assert that there has been an invasion—even an important invasion—of its territory, or choose to regard any trifling irregularity—an "insult" to the flag, a breach of good manners, a frontier "incident"—as a declaration of war. Such evasions must be provided against. It is for this reason that "all-in" arbitration declarations and treaties, or general resolutions outlawing aggressive war, are easily circumvented, and that only comprehensive national legislation can compass the abolition of aggressive war and, eventually, the abolition of war as such. Defensive treaties, under the League, such as the Locarno Treaty, would, of course, be allowed for; but these are temporary makeshifts.

Any nation that honestly desires to abolish war, should honestly legislate against aggressive war.

If, as our Cabinet Ministers tell us, another war would be the end of our civilisation, and if, as Lord Cecil asserts, "Peace is the only real security for the progress and prosperity of all nations, especially of ourselves" (*The Sunday Times*, 27/11/1927), then, in the name of common sense and common honesty, can we do less than reorganise our relations with other nations on the basis of a peaceful settlement of all disputes whatever? Why envisage the fabulous and practically never-ending task of concluding some sixty individual and necessarily inconclusive treaties when a single Act of Parliament will accomplish the end and this far more effectually and ever so much more quickly? Just as we began by outlawing the slave trade and abolishing slavery within our dominions, so let us begin by abolishing aggressive war on our part.

This peace-pipe measure would entail a radical change in the contracts of those serving in the country's forces. These contracts would stipulate that our soldiers and officers are only engaged for defensive wars and that any military or civil participant in any aggressive movement will be arraigned for high treason or prosecuted as a common criminal. Marching orders would emanate from a settled non-military and non-ministerial authority including all political parties at least, and have to be arrived at in a certain way and cast and published in a certain form. Similarly, too, with orders to stop any defensive war.

If, then, we are honest in our condemnation of aggressive war—as we surely are—can we do less or would we do less? And may we not safely add that ANY GOVERNMENT NOT INTRODUCING AND PRESSING SUCH LEGISLATION, HAS FAILED TO PROVE THAT IT IS OPPOSED TO AGGRESSIVE WAR?

Our first measure calls for a third act, the legislative renunciation of conquest and of loot. Sincerity must insist on this. If we hesitated here, our intentions would be suspect. The signatories to the Protocol agreed to this, and how can we possibly shrink from committing ourselves on this issue? And this act should include leaving a country on the cessation of hostilities and the fixing of war damages by an international tribunal.

A fourth, and last, act would be our undertaking to place before some international authority every grave or critical difference we have with another nation and our complying with the award of that authority. Here, too, we could do no less nor wish to do less, although we might do more and legislatively refer the settlement of all serious international disputes to competent national and international courts.

This, then, is measure No. 1, proving our good faith to ourselves and other nations—a measure infinitely more solid and far-reaching than signing a general declaration or an individual treaty. In fact, anything short of a quite compre-

Remember that the machinery of the League of Nations is always at the disposal of peaceably inclined nations.

hensive measure would be a waste of effort. We must aim at nothing less than the maximum.

Measure No. 2 follows again the spirit of the British anti-slavery campaign. Having put our house in order, so far as others will permit us to do this, we may carry, with a good conscience, the campaign into the international field.

Let us appoint or organise a number of Parliamentary, Royal, and International Commissions to study such questions as total disarmament by all nations, the composing of existing international difficulties, the peaceful settlement of international disputes, the codification and development of international law, the strengthening of the Permanent Court of International Justice and of the International Labour Organisation, international legislation, international propaganda, ALL FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF THE TOTAL ABOLITION OF WAR WITHIN THE NEXT FEW YEARS, before the all-dreaded catastrophe could blight our hopes. Granted the right attitude and also men and women experts of the highest ability (who would be only too willing to co-operate), and a year or two would yield what would seem miraculous results. The drafting of the Covenant is here an excellent illustration of how much splendid work can be crowded into a few months when the will to do and dare is present, when there is an inflexible determination to reach a historic goal quickly.

England's example would be bound to act infectiously to a certain extent. But we must go further. Directly, through our Ambassadors, and through the League, our Government should approach other Governments with a view to these joining in the legislative campaign against aggressive war. We could place our experience and our experts at the disposal of other nations, and furnish whatever other aid is asked of us and that we can give. Once the movement has gained some momentum, the Powers who have neutralised themselves could act concertedly and accelerate a general neutralisation by formulating model national legislative Acts which would greatly facilitate all nations to fall into line with the permanent peace movement. At that stage the League, on the basis of a radically amended Covenant which assumes the illegality of all war, could draw up conventions of an international character that would unify and solidify the initial measures adopted for the abolition of war. Complete international disarmament and all that it entails would follow as a consequential act, duly allowing for domestic needs, pirates, and uncivilised tribes.

M. Briand, the French Foreign Minister, has repeatedly spoken with burning eloquence of the urgent need of abolishing war and ushering in a lasting peace regime. He has gone a step further and signed the Protocol and other proposed pacts on behalf of his country. Is it, hence, not reasonable to hope that France would at once follow suit and rival England

The legislative abolition of aggressive war is not a party question; let all parties, then, unite in realising it.

in any heroic effort it would make to expunge from its legislation, departmental practices, and general customs, anything suggestive of war diplomacy? And official Germany has been of late the most conspicuous champion of that "perpetual peace" which its immortal philosopher, Kant, fervently advocated over a hundred years ago. May we not trust that it will be enthused by our action at a very early stage? And the United States, could it resist such a generous gesture and fail to set speedily a good example to Latin America? And has not the Soviet Government courageously declared in favour of the total abolition of war; and, if it has, why should it not honour its bond by corresponding legislative and other acts? And the three Scandinavian countries need only hear of the suggestion and their immaculate record warrants us in believing that they would eagerly respond. And so on with other countries not less interested in rooting out war.

Only let the British Commonwealth lead, as it led in the anti-slavery campaign, and who will not follow? Actions will speak louder than asseverations and protestations. A COALITION MINISTRY WOULD BE THE MOST APPROPRIATE FOR REALISING SUCH A NON-PARTY PROGRAMME; *but, in default, let us support whatever party is eager to concentrate, first, on legislatively outlawing aggressive war so far as Great Britain is concerned and, secondly, on promoting the total and immediate legislative abolition of aggressive war and of armaments internationally.*

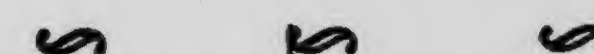
One word more. Public opinion needs to be enlightened on the critical moment the world is now passing through. The true inwardness of a war to-day should be preached by the Government in season and out of season and a wholesale, a stupendous propaganda should be carried on in this matter through whatever channels are open or could be opened—monster posters would be the most effective. Every sane person should be made fully aware that he must positively and in every way discourage in himself and in others any fraternising with the war spirit or any indifference towards its abolition. This will not only mean that the Government of the day will have the fullest support of the population in its arduous endeavours; but such an attitude is certain to impress other peoples deeply and thus tend to prepare the atmosphere everywhere for similar peace legislation.

Lastly, the Government, it may be suggested, should allocate at least five million pounds a year—it might well allocate five times that amount—out of the funds voted for national defence, to be spent on open national and international peace propaganda. In fact, it is quite likely that the new legislation very lightly sketched above will automatically produce an appreciable relief to the unhappy tax-payer, of whose every

You can think of difficulties? Others will suggest means of how to overcome them.

pound contribution fourteen shillings are swallowed up by claims in connection with present military preparations or past wars. We were generous in the cause of freeing the slave; let us not be less liberal in freeing mankind from the arch-curse of war.

All that the author pleads for is that we should view things in perspective, focus what is of central importance, concentrate our energies where most required, and, above all, *do first things first*. He would urge that by the method of microscopic circumspection which Lord Cecil condemns, and which largely dominates military and Government circles, it is absolutely impossible to achieve anything of consequence, certainly not the abolition of war. And, on the other hand, he contends that immense as is the programme outlined above, its execution is not likely to encounter serious difficulties once we boldly face the issue. It is only those of little faith who cannot move mountains; to him who has eyes to see, ears to hear, and a mind to understand, the difficulty is non-existent. It is marvellous how formidable obstacles appear insignificant and are readily brushed aside when enthusiasm and determination are present, and how insignificant obstacles appear formidable and cannot be removed when we are lukewarm and shilly-shallying. We must rise to the historic occasion and, if we do, we may confidently look forward to the result. All things considered, our task is no greater than was that of the Paris Peace Conference and the motive for realising it effectually and rapidly no less compelling.



Let it be said in conclusion that at the present juncture no cause can even distantly compare as to importance and urgency with that advocating the total, immediate, and universal abolition of war, for war has become, as Field-Marshal Sir William Robertson aptly says, "a wholly detestable thing," menacing the very existence of our civilisation, fiendishly destructive beyond anything the imagination of insane tyrants has ever conceived, and appallingly ruinous to victors and vanquished alike. He who genuinely loves the right and loves mankind, who cares for his country and his children, who revels in the treasures of art and science, who looks forward to a brighter day for humanity, cannot doubt that the paramount duty to-day of each and all of us, subject to our personal circumstances, is earnestly and insistently to plead and to work for the speedy abolition of war. And this great object we shall, in the first instance, best promote (a) *by inducing our own Parliament to concentrate without delay on passing appropriate legislation, legislation which shall preclude the possibility of our resorting to military measures except for rebutting,*

Break up the machinery permitting aggressive wars and the future will not know them.

in agreement with Parliament and the League, serious military attacks, and (b) by subsequently persuading all other nations to pass similar comprehensive legislation and thus end war.

Let us remember, too, not to be diverted by hoped-for or existing arbitration pacts, since, however excellent, they cannot be regarded in any way as substitutes for comprehensive national legislation, nor to forget that nothing great has ever been accomplished without passionate devotion and unflinching determination.

January, 1928.

[The author is publishing this first edition of 1,400 copies at his own expense. Those who feel that a wider appeal is desirable are invited to promise donations for the printing and posting of a given number of copies (small or large). Single copies of the pamphlet, 6d., post free. Correspondence of any kind should be addressed to the author, c/o Utopia Press, Ltd., 44, Worship Street, London, E.C.2.]

Every nation is a potential aggressor so long as it has not legislatively eliminated aggressive war.

Only by making aggressive war impossible, can we abolish war; all other means are delusive.

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